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THOUGHTS

ON

THE ANTI-MONARCHICAL TENDENCY

OF

THE MEASURES OF

THE BRITISH MINISTER.

CONTAINED IN

A LETTER TO A NOBLE LORD.

BY WILLIAM ADAMS.

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"That Monarch fits the safest on his Throne
"Who makes the People's Interest his own."
DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

LONDON:
Printed for the Author, and sold by H. D. SYMONDS,
Paternoster Row.

1796.

Price ONE SHILLING.

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120

THOUGHTS,

&c. &c.

THERE is nothing ſo valuable as truth, and therefore it ought not to be withheld from Kings. It has been the unhappy fate of Monarchs ſeldom to hear the voice of truth, becauſe the courtiers who ſurround them have an intereſt in deceiving them.

It is matter of ſurprize that many perſons are ignorant of the political virtues of the Miniſter, though they muſt all feel the *bleſſings* of his adminiſtration. Superficial obſervers have imagined that he is a zealous advocate for kingly government, and the determined enemy of republics; but this is certainly a miſtaken notion. A little

reflection will prove, that ſo far from his being inimical to a republican form of government, he has an incurable averſion to a monarchy, although his way of ſhewing his diſapprobation of it may be ſomewhat ſingular. Certain it is that the people of France are much more indebted to Mr. Pitt for the overthrow of their monarchy, than to all the political writers whoſe works have had the honour to excite the attention of his Majeſty's Attorney-General.

Under the old government of France, power was exerciſed chiefly to ſecure the riches of court ſycophants. Rank was conferred as a reward for corruption, and maintained by tyranny and popular oppreſſion. Wealth and honours were confined to the moſt worthleſs, and nothing was aſſigned to the people, but the privilege of obeying their maſters. Mr. Pitt had too much ſagacity not to perceive that the more Frenchmen were led to reflect on this ignominious ſtate of bondage, the greater would be their energy and zeal in favour of liberty, and that they would even prefer the moſt defective republic to their ancient ſyſtem of deſpotiſm. What could be better adapted to give life, ſpirit and vigour to theſe ſentiments, than a war of opinion, which, in plain Engliſh, is tantamount to telling the people of France that they are not

not qualified to exerciſe the faculties of rational beings; and that all forms of government, like places and penſions, muſt depend upon the *hereditary wiſdom of Kings*, and the incorruptible intgrity of their Miniſters? It were too groſs an affront to the underſtanding of the Britiſh Miniſter, to ſuggeſt that he ever intended to uphold monarchy by ſuch meaſures. Thoſe who entertain that opinion libel his character. I will do him juſtice. I take it for granted (from a perfect knowledge of the man) that his primary intention in the commencement of the war againſt the French nation was to create in the minds of an oppreſſed people, an unconquerable diſlike to civil and religious tyranny. To this end all his meaſures have had a direct tendency, and he has the *conſolation* to reflect that his labours have not been in vain.

It was once ſaid by an elegant writer of a former ſtateſman, that " if nature had given him abilities " equal to his inclination, he would have been the " firſt Miniſter this country ever knew for the ruin " of a free people." Mr. Pitt has manifeſted both abilities and inclination, and has, by the exerciſe of both, done more to excite the people abroad to juſtifiable revolt, and awaken the ſpirit of liberty at home, than all his predeceſſors put together.

The meaſures he has adopted with reſpect to foreign princes, could ſcarcely fail to inſure their ruin and diſgrace, and conſequently to favour the eſtabliſhment of a commonwealth on the ruins of a fallen monarchy. Politicians generally diſguiſe their real intentions under the maſk of friendſhip; and frequently thoſe are the firſt to feel their indignation, who flattered themſelves with being the objects of their approbation. Hence we find that in the early part of the French revolution, Mr. Pitt profeſſed a zealous attachment to the perſon and cauſe of the ill-fated Louis the Sixteenth; but the proofs he exhibited of the *ſincerity* of his regard, was by irritating his ſubjects to put him to death. He knew that the French monarchy had long been a cauſe of war and alarm to this country, and that its overthrow might produce the bleſſings of liberty and peace.

It had always been the pride and ſpirit of England to exert its utmoſt vigour to keep down the lofty ambition of Gallic monarchs, and to ſuppreſs, if poſſible, the ſpirit of papal tyranny, becauſe we had experienced that civil and religious tyranny always accompany each other, or, as a ſenſible writer has it, " Religious tyranny puts on the " galling chains, and the civil power is called in " to rivet and fix them." It is extremely abſurd

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to ſuppoſe that a man, poſſeſſing half the ſagacity of the Miniſter, could ever have it in ſerious contemplation to reſtore by a ſyſtem of warfare a diſcarded King to the throne of France, and ſupport with the laſt drop of Engliſh blood the very monarchy we formerly felt it our pride and intereſt to humble, and to protect a ſyſtem of religion we dreaded, as hoſtile to the principles of the Britiſh conſtitution. Who can believe that ſuch an imaginary conqueſt was to be obtained by a handful of French emigrants releaſed from priſon, who, like knight errants of old, had ſworn vengeance againſt their native land, but, unfortunately, forgot the means by which it was to be effected? It never could have entered into the view of the Miniſter to have ſpread ſlaughter and deſolation throughout Europe to place a King upon a throne which could not be ſecured to him even for three months, and which, from the events that have happened in France, no monarch in his ſenſes would accept of. Mr. Pitt well knew that, even admitting that the Britiſh troops had reached the gates of Paris, and that two-thirds of the people had been ſuddenly converted to monarchy, yet the war would have been unjuſtifiable, becauſe the Britiſh government could have no pretext to expend the blood and treaſure of this country to ſet up a King in another, and becauſe the reſtoration

tion of monarchy in France could produce no real benefit to England; and even if it could, the advantage could never be adequate to the expence of ſupporting and protecting it. Beſides, it were too degrading to the underſtanding of Mr. Pitt to ſuppoſe that he ſhould conſent that the Britiſh nation, who had offered 20,000l. for the head of a Britiſh Pretender, ſhould expend more than an hundred millions to ſupport a foreign one.

One of the principal objects of Mr. Pitt, in the commencement of the war againſt France, was certainly, as he himſelf truly ſtated, to manifeſt our fidelity and affection for our worthy *quondam* friends and allies the Dutch, and moſt unqueſtionably the people of Holland are under infinite obligations to the meaſures of Mr. Pitt, ſince they have produced the very end they had long wiſhed and laboured to accompliſh. He has given them liberty, and they, in return for his kindneſs, have made us a preſent of a Stadtholder, who, it is ſaid, is equally grateful to the Miniſter, for exonerating him from the fatigues and ſolicitudes of ſtate affairs.

It has been a general complaint that the war has been productive of an alarming ſcarcity of proviſions; but this temporary evil the wiſdom of Mr.

Mr. Pitt no doubt foreſaw might, in the end, be productive of a permanent good. He knew that thoſe who are too much in the habit of feeding their bodies, are apt to ſtarve their ſouls. Hence the dulneſs and inſenſibility of the members of corporate towns, whoſe ideas are generally as groſs as their bodies; and who, in order to manifeſt what they called their loyalty, have for theſe laſt three years beſtowed the epithet of *Jacobin* on all thoſe who ſtood up for the principles which ſeated the King of England on his throne. A little abſtinence has in ſome degree diſperſed the cloud that hung over their underſtandings, and they now begin to ſee that the beſt citizens of any ſtate, are the opponents of corruption and tyranny.

The people of England are now pretty free from the diſeaſes attendant on luxury, which enervate the mind, debilitate the body, and render men abject, obſequious, and ſelfiſh, like the ſpaniels that ſurround the palaces of deſpots. For this we are certainly indebted to the *wiſdom* and *virtue* of Mr. Pitt, who has removed from Engliſhmen every temptation to pride, ariſing either from national proſperity or national honour.

It is pretty evident, from every point of view in which we can look at the political conduct of this

this extraordinary Miniſter, that whatever obligation the people of Holland may owe him, he never intended any kindneſs to the Gallic Princes; for though the war has been ſaid to be continued for the purpoſe of recovering to a Prince a loſt kingdom, yet this kingdom is to be deſolated, and its navy totally deſtroyed, before it is to come into the poſſeſſion of the fugitive monarch who claims it as his birthright. This is a ſtrong proof that he was no more ſincere when he profeſſed to have the intereſt of the French Princes at heart, than when he maintained in the Houſe of Commons that to continue a hopeleſs war was the way to obtain an honourable peace. His intention, it is obvious, from the general tenor of his meaſures, was not to ſecure the thrones of foreign monarchs, but to humble their pride. It is not always convenient for great ſtateſmen, like Mr. Pitt, to ſpeak their mind in their dealings with Kings, any more than in their tranſactions with the people; and this conſideration will account for Mr. Pitt's conduct in reſpect to a reform in the Engliſh ſyſtem of repreſentation, which has been ſo frequently the ſubject of animadverſion. He knew in the firſt place, that the various and contradictory plans of reform would prevent the adoption of any one of them, and that the Houſe of Commons would always ſpurn at the only equitable

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one—univerſal ſuffrage and annual parliaments, all others being ſhort of the conſtitutional rights of the people. He could therefore, when neceſſary for his popularity, ſpeak with the greateſt vehemence and apparent zeal in favour of reform, becauſe he was conſcious that there was no danger of its ever taking place. Indeed it is not to be expected that a Houſe of Commons conſtituted according to the preſent ſyſtem will ever conſent to any thing like ſelf-amendment. Political reformation, among modern ſtateſmen and legiſlators, like private virtue and morality, is a thing often mentioned as excellent in theory, but is never intended to be put in practice. They conceive they have nothing more to do with theſe qualities than to recommend them to others. Before any deſcription of men will ſet about the buſineſs of reformation they muſt feel the need of it. The majority of the Houſe of Commons feel no conviction that a reform is neceſſary, and therefore it is matter of no ſurprize that all petitions on that ſubject ſhould be diſregarded, as totally inconſiſtent with that ſyſtem by which placemen are to be ſupported, and miniſterial majorities to be procured. Mr. Pitt undoubtedly feels that it would be an affront to the underſtandings of the Members of the Houſe to ſuppoſe that they would give their conſent to a meaſure which muſt neceſſarily deprive many of

them of their ſeats, and conſequently of the wages of corruption. All petitions for ſuch a purpoſe is, in plain Engliſh, ſaying to the Members, 'Gentlemen, we find that you are a ſet of venal 'and corrupt men, who purchaſe your ſeats "like "ſtalls for cattle in a fair;" 'and have converted 'St. Stephen's chapel into a den of thieves; get 'out of the Houſe, and make room for more ho-'neſt men.'—It is not to be wondered at that the anſwer ſhould be—"Ye ſtupid Swine, if we are "as corrupt as ye repreſent us to be, how can ye "expect us to reform ourſelves; for reformation is "a proof of virtue, a quality to which we are "total ſtrangers?"

I give the Miniſter credit for being in his *private opinion* friendly to the plan of univerſal ſuffrage; and it cannot be doubted that all his meaſures have a direct tendency to induce the people of England to demand with a firm tone that as a right, which, he cannot be inſenſible, will never be granted them, in conſequence of any petitions to parliament. Tyranny may for a time damp the minds of the people, and ſuppreſs even the ſighs of liberty, but in the end muſt awaken the ſpirit and energy of the whole nation to aſſert their rights, as men and citizens, in oppoſition to every ſpecies of miniſterial uſurpation.

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It has been for theſe laſt three years paſt the habit of the Members of Adminiſtration to beſtow the higheſt panegyrick on the Britiſh conſtitution; and although I always conſidered laviſh encomiums to be a kind of "cenſure in diſguiſe," yet I will take for granted that the reaſon why Mr. Pitt ſo much admires the Britiſh conſtitution is, becauſe he is *perſuaded* that the principles of it maintain the right of univerſal ſuffrage. There can indeed be no real diſtinction drawn between a total ſubverſion of the firſt principle of the right of election and the limitation of it to a few qualified perſons, ſo called; for if the right be withheld from any part of the people, not incapacitated by inſanity, crime, &c. a principle is admitted on which it may be denied to the reſt; and the reaſon is, becauſe the groundwork being deſtroyed, namely, that in a free conſtitution the governing power is derived from the people at large, the very ſame pretext, be it what it may, on which you deprive one part of the people of the elective franchiſe, you may deprive the other. Mr. Pitt is not to learn that thoſe perſons to whom the elective franchiſe is at preſent limited, are not diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of their fellow citizens either by their virtue or their talents. He knows that the poſſeſſion of a freehold of forty ſhillings a year, or of any other amount, will nei-

ther give wiſdom to the head nor integrity to the heart. Property is ſeldom acquired by the moſt ſcrupulous attention to truth and juſtice. It is too frequently the fruits of a ſordid, baſe, and corrupted heart, while poverty is often to be attributed to a rich, independent mind, that ſpurns at gold in exchange for liberty, virtue, and truth.

From the obſervations I have already made it is pretty evident that Mr. Pitt has it in contemplation to bring monarchical governments into diſrepute, and to provoke the people of England to a ſpirit of revolt. There is nothing ſo likely to inſure this end as when, in any ſyſtem of tyranny, inſult is added to oppreſſion. "Injuries," ſays a celebrated writer, "may be forgiven, but inſult "can only be atoned for." To complain of the want of redreſs of popular grievances is now become totally uſeleſs, becauſe we are told that we have no grievances to redreſs; that thoſe who complain are enemies to good order, and that all are diſaffected and wicked men who concern themſelves with the affairs of government, a ſcience far beyond the capacities of the great maſs of the people, whoſe duty it is "*to obey*," but never to pretend to underſtand the law which is to be the rule of their obedience.

It is therefore deemed ſedition to ſay that our privileges have been wreſted from us by the hand of deſpotiſm, becauſe we are told that we never had any liberties to loſe, and that the rights of man are ſcandalous libels on the Britiſh government. To complain of the poverty of the times is to betray the ſpirit of a plunderer and a leveller; and the true criterion of being a good ſubject is to inſiſt that the public money is laid out with the greateſt wiſdom, economy and propriety, when it is applied to penſion political apoſtacy, and reward the advocates of deſpotiſm.

Experience has too evidently proved that it is poſſible that thoſe very men may become the inſtruments of the deſtruction of the nation, whom the law appointed as the immediate guardians of the people's rights and liberties. This indeed may be truly ſaid to be the caſe when the whole power of the country is reſolved into the will and pleaſure of a majority of one Houſe of Parliament, under the direction of a few men, denonimated a Cabinet Council, and when we perceive this majority readily follow up the violation of the right of election with an infringement on the right of petitioning, under the pretence of ſuppreſſing diſloyal aſſociations. The Miniſter certainly intended that the people ſhould no longer poſſeſs the right of troubling

bling government with their petitions, and therefore adopted a meaſure called the Convention Act, which he knew would operate as a virtual repeal of the Bill of Rights. This Convention Act, under colour of preſerving the Britiſh Conſtitution, was unqueſtionably intended to deſtroy what little remained of it, and thereby perhaps to verify the obſervation of Thomas Paine, that the People of England have no Conſtitution.

By the Bill of Rights the people have the privilege to petition. What does this right imply?—It neceſſarily implies a free diſcuſſion of all ſubjects to which the petition relates. But the Miniſter ſays that theſe meetings are compoſed of *diſcontented* people! Moſt certainly they are: for if they were *contented* they would have nothing to ſtate in their petitions.

Lord Bolingbroke, ſpeaking of the power of Parliaments, affirms that there are ſome things which a Parliament cannot do. It cannot, he ſays, annul the Conſtitution; and that if it ſhould attempt by any act to overturn the principles of the Conſtitution, the whole body of the people would have a right to reſiſt. Mr. Pitt, however, can effect what former miniſters thought impoſſible, and may with propriety adopt the language of Sir Robert

bert Walpole, who uſed to boaſt that he had trained his Fellows (as he termed his majority in the Houſe of Commons) to ſuch a degree of flexibility and miniſterial diſcipline, that if he was to deſire them to vote that Jeſus Chriſt and Mahomet were one and the ſame perſon, he had no doubt of their ready compliance.

In a monarchy like our's the prince and the people are equally liable to be deceived by the artifices of Miniſters; but the oppreſſion of the People, in the end, generally proves the ruin of the Monarch, who ſuffers for the crimes of his ſervants. This is very likely to happen when a Prince makes an injudicious choice of ſervants, a thing not at all uncommon with Kings; and when the Parliament ſuffers them to go on in an uninterrupted courſe of iniquity, and aſſiſts them in concealing the true ſtate of affairs both from the King and the People. The Miniſters will then, ſhould the People call aloud for juſtice, brand them with the name of a ſeditious faction, and perſuade the deluded Prince that his beſt friends are thoſe who are ſtriving to alienate from him for ever the affections of his ſubjects. Of the truth of this obſervation hiſtory furniſhes many examples; and perhaps it may not be inapplicable to ſtate the following one from the Hiſtory

of

of China, with which ſome Kings and Miniſters may not be acquainted.

" Jurchin the Emperor had every good diſpo-
" ſition requiſite to incline him to govern mildly,
" yet he could not be called a wiſe man, who was
" ſo injudicious in the choice of his miniſters and
" great officers of ſtate. Theſe men made uſe of
" his name and authority to gratify their own am-
" bition and ſupport their power. The conſe-
" quence was, that the people were much oppreſſ-
" ed; but their complaints and grievances never
" reached the ears of the Emperor, for the Miniſ-
" ters had filled the court with their tools and de-
" pendants, and ſtopped all the avenues of com-
" plaint to the Emperor. Thus they went on for
" a conſiderable time to deceive him, and were
" juſtly ſaid to have ſold both the Emperor and
" empire.

" A rebellion was at length begun by Ly and
" Chum, who had been both generals in the army,
" and who had been calumniated and groſsly ill
" treated by the Miniſters, for no other reaſon than
" becauſe they would not be ſlaves to their deſpotic
" power. They knew they ſhould not be oppoſed
" by the great maſs of the people, who wanted
" nothing but leaders in whom they could confide,

" to

" to induce them to revolt againſt the government.
" As to thoſe who had the guard of the Emperor's
" perſon, and the government of the ſtate, Ly, the
" rebel, was ſure of gaining them over at any
" time; and accordingly, when the officers and
" magiſtrates who had been appointed by theſe bad
" miniſters ſaw the rebellion look a little formida-
" ble, and conſcious that their own meaſures had
" produced it, they entered into a conſpiracy for
" ſecuring themſelves by aſſiſting in the rebellion.
" Ly accordingly ſent ſome of his people, diſguiſed
" as merchants, who entered into a ſort of treaty
" with them to oppoſe the unhappy Emperor, who,
" when the city was delivered up, retired within
" his palace, and with his own hands put to death
" his only daughter; after which he and his Em-
" preſs hanged themſelves: but before he diſpatch-
" ed himſelf he wrote with his own blood as fol-
" lows—' The Mandarins are traitors; they have
" perfidiouſly betrayed their prince, and all of
" them deſerve to be put to death: it will be a
" glorious action to execute this piece of juſtice
" upon them, for it is fit that they ſhould die, in
" order that thoſe who ſucceed them may be taught
" by their example to acquit themſelves with fide-
" lity, and avoid injuſtice and popular oppreſſion.
" As for the People, they are not criminal in what
" they have done, and deſerve no puniſhment.

"They were driven to revolt by the wickedneſs "of miniſters. I have loſt that great empire "which deſcended to me from my anceſtors, by "the treachery and tyranny of the mandarins. In "me is finiſhed the royal line which ſo many "kings, my progenitors, continued down to me "with all the grandeur and dignity that accom-"panies royalty. I will therefore for ever cloſe "my eyes, that I may not ſee the empire ſo de-"ſcended to me from ſucceſſive generations, ru-"ined and ruled by tyrants; I will go and deprive "myſelf of life, for the preſervation of which, "I will not be indebted to the baſeſt of men. It "is fit the prince ſhould die, when his whole eſtate "is expiring." Thus ended a monarch who commanded an hundred millions of ſubjects, and whoſe ruin was owing to the tyranny, deluſion and wickedneſs of his miniſters.

It is a truth confirmed by the hiſtory of nations, that the people ſeldom or never join in a confederacy againſt the government under which they live, unleſs there is a previous exiſting conſpiracy formed by Kings or their miniſters againſt the liberties of the people; and it is equally true that a ſettled ſyſtem of corruption muſt ſooner or later deſtroy itſelf. It cannot be denied, even by the advocates for ariſtocracy, that the power and influence

fluence of the crown, or rather of the miniſters of the crown, have by degrees become ſo enormous in this country, that it has overſet the balance of the ſtate, and made what little liberties the people ſtill enjoy to depend on the arbitrary will and pleaſure of his Majeſty's confidential ſervants. By means of this increaſing influence what is there that any miniſters for the time being cannot do? We know that they can influence elections of all kinds, and obtain confiding majorities in both Houſes of Parliament; and when they have got the direction of the two Houſes, where is the limits to the Miniſter's power? For if both Houſes are under his controul, the people are in as complete a ſtate of ſlavery as if they had agreed to an abſolute ſurrender of all their rights and liberties at the feet of the reigning monarch. Whenever this is the caſe, the ſcience of government is reduced to a mean, narrow, and uniform ſyſtem of venality and corruption, under which the old forms are preſerved, but it muſt be viſible to every man of obſervation that the vital ſpirit of a free conſtitution is gone, and in ſhort, that the people are ſubjected to the dominion of a ſelf-created oligarchy. Under ſuch a ſyſtem it is abſurd for the people to talk of bringing any miniſter to juſtice for his conduct, let it be as deſpotic, corrupt, perfidious and rapacious as it

is poſſible to conceive. Their only redreſs muſt be in their own virtue.

A government like this, one would reaſonably ſuppoſe, no monarch would deſire to countenance, becauſe it is repugnant to his intereſt, and he muſt be very deficient in wiſdom to ſuppoſe it can be ſecure. Whatever Miniſter, therefore, brings a nation to this condition, is either a bitter enemy to the ſtability of monarchy, or elſe is exciting a ſpirit of hoſtility againſt all monarchical governments, without intending it. I before hinted that the French, in a great degree, owe the eſtabliſhment of their preſent form of government to the meaſures of the Britiſh miniſtry. Indeed it may with great truth be affirmed, that if Mr. Pitt had been employed by Frenchmen to advance their revolution, and effect a ſimilar one in England, he could not have made uſe of meaſures better calculated to produce ſuch events than thoſe he has adopted. In all revolutions the greateſt difficulty againſt their ſucceſs is to prevent thoſe internal quarrels and animoſities which muſt naturally ariſe among ſuch a numerous body as the inhabitants of a whole nation, from getting to ſuch a height, as to deſtroy that firmneſs and energy of conduct which is abſolutely neceſſary, to attain their primary and great object. Mr. Pitt has called forth all the energy and vigour of Frenchmen,

men, and, by inſulting the whole nation, made them all unanimous in their oppoſition to his ſchemes. Hence it is that all their internal diſſentions give way when they are reminded of his conduct, and they riſe with indignation, as one man, to oppoſe the proud and preſumptuous foreigner who dares to dictate to a people who had ſpirit enough to break aſunder the fetters of their ſlavery, and aſſert their liberty in the firmeſt tone, what form of government they ſhould adopt. Could it indeed be reaſonably ſuppoſed, that a nation who diſdained to be guided by the opinion of its own Monarch, and rejected the counſel of its own nobles, lawyers, and prieſts, ſhould ſurrender up its underſtanding to a few lawyers in the Engliſh cabinet, who took it into their heads that Frenchmen were not qualified to judge what form of government was the beſt ſuited to their own genius, temper, diſpoſition, and ſocial happineſs?

The commencement of hoſtilities againſt the French by the Engliſh Government may be fairly dated from the time Mr. Burke publiſhed his pamphlet and delivered his violent invective againſt the French Revolution, the new government they had adopted, and, in ſhort, their whole proceedings, which he reprobated with all the bitterneſs of his virulence, and all the force of his eccentric imagination.

gination. This he did as a Britiſh ſenator in the Houſe of Commons. It is a juſt obſervation, that he who adopts the ſentiments of another makes them his own. Mr. Pitt not only adopted the ſentiments of Mr. Burke, but he joined with him in his reproaches on their new conſtitution, and repreſented the general tenor of the proceedings of the French at that period to be inimical to all civilized nations. This language was heard of in France with inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment. It tended however to animate their zeal in the great cauſe in which they had embarked, and to quicken their vigilance. The combination that was formed againſt them ſerved to excite a rooted diſlike to all Monarchical Governments, becauſe, from the alarm the Miniſters of Kings had diſcovered in conſequence of their having ſhaken off the yoke of deſpotiſm, it was natural enough for the French to conclude that thoſe governments were totally inconſiſtent with the eſtabliſhment of liberty. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the French ſhould conſider all perſons in France who had any inclination or intereſt towards Royalty to be their mortal enemies, and drive them from their country, in order that ſome other nation might have the honour of ſupporting them. This, I ſay, can be matter of no ſurprize, when we conſider the pains Mr. Pitt has taken to render Monarchical Govern-

Governments odious and terrific in the eyes of Frenchmen, by attempting to make them the inſtruments of ſtarving twenty-ſix millions of ſouls, and thereby exhibit to the world the mildneſs, mercy, juſtice, and wiſdom, of Kings!

It has been common for the friends of liberty to expreſs their thanks to Mr. Burke for his pamphlet on the French Revolution, becauſe that pamphlet, like the violent oppoſition of the Pope to the new doctrines maintained by Martin Luther, awakened the ſpirit of rational enquiry, and led the people to ſearch a little into the origin and principles of things, and conſequently ſhook the foundation of civil and religious deſpotiſm. Mr. Burke is not more entitled to the thanks of mankind for his political theory, than Mr. Pitt is for endeavouring to carry that theory into practice; becauſe, however wild and deteſtable it might appear on paper, it muſt be infinitely more diſguſting when attempted to be put into practice, and could not fail to operate as an antidote againſt the adoption of any ſyſtem of government that countenances principles ſo inimical to the freedom of man.

Mr. Burke is univerſally admired for the brilliancy of his imagination, but nobody mentions the ſolidity of his judgment. Men of warm imaginations

ginations ſeldom reaſon correctly, becauſe they are too fond of ſoaring aloft in metaphor beyond the boundaries which good ſenſe preſcribes; and their fancy ſo often runs riot that their underſtandings are ſeldom in a perfect ſtate of ſobriety. Mr. Burke has ſold his imagination to his Majeſty's Miniſters; and as they have acted in conformity to it, it is matter of no ſurprize that all their ſucceſſes ſhould be *chimerical.* A few years will probably ſhow that they have rated his political counſel at much too high a price, and perhaps convince them, when it is too late, that it would have been a wiſer meaſure by far to have allowed him a penſion on condition of his never writing any more on the ſubject of politics. It is really cruel in Miniſters to encourage this old gentleman to diſgrace the evening of his life, by accepting a penſion for his political apoſtacy, which perhaps he would never have done, had he not ſurvived the vigour of his underſtanding.

It is owing to the *wiſdom* of the Britiſh Miniſtry, aſſiſted by their chief counſellor Mr. Burke, that the French now hold the higheſt rank as a military power among the nations of Europe. England has *kindly* furniſhed the Monarchs of Pruſſia and Germany with a *few millions,* for the purpoſe of perfecting the French in military diſcipline and tactics, and

and the latter have manifeſted their improvement in thoſe martial ſciences, by beating their enemies in every quarter, and obtaining more victories than even the fancy of Mr. Burke ever imputed to their ambition.

It is a temper of mind peculiar perhaps to Mr. Pitt, to take occaſion to triumph in proportion as his meaſures prove diſaſtrous, and to reſt his claim to the confidence of the public on his continuation of a ſyſtem of deluſion. Mr. Pitt knows by experience and obſervation that a blind confidence is as neceſſary to keep a deſpotic Miniſter in power as implicit faith is to the ſupport of the prieſthood, becauſe a ſtrict examination of their reſpective merits would probably produce the downfal of both. The reverend Bench of Biſhops, whoſe pontifical dignities and honours depend upon *myſtery*, have therefore (with only the exception of one excellent man) uniformly ſupported the meaſures of the Miniſter, and *piouſly* offered up their prayers that God would be *mercifully* pleaſed to cure the French of their infidelity and republicaniſm, by removing them from the face of the earth, either by fire, ſword, or famine. The prayers of the reverend prelates however have proved as unavailing as the lamentations of Mr. Burke on the departure of the age of chivalry. Indeed, when prieſts interfere in

political conflicts it is almoſt certain that ſome hateful ſyſtem of deſpotiſm is intended to be ſupported; but it is ſome conſolation that they ſeldom fail to ruin the cauſe they eſpouſe. The day has at length arrived when their frowns have no other effect upon the people than to remind them of the diſgraceful times of bigotry and ſuperſtition, and to increaſe their abhorrence of eccleſiaſtical tyranny.

The means which the Miniſter has taken to inſpire the people of England with an affection and reverence for the Britiſh Conſtitution are much better calculated to induce them to doubt of its excellence than to admire its beauty or reſpect its wiſdom. It has of late been frequently exhibited as the moſt perfect ſyſtem in the world, and as the admiration of ſurrounding nations, and yet the people are forbid to examine and diſcuſs its merits. If it be ſo perfect a piece of workmanſhip as Mr. Pitt has deſcribed it, and ſo univerſally admired, it certainly did not require the panegyric of courtiers, placemen, penſioners, and borough-mongers, to recommend it, whoſe encomiums muſt naturally excite conſiderable ſuſpicion. The difference between a good conſtitution and a bad one, according to the notions of men of *Common Senſe*, is, that the former, like truth, will court exa-

examination, and the more it is inveſtigated the better it will be approved. Its native excellence will be its beſt advocate. The latter, like falſehood, will ſhrink from a ſcrutiny, and ſtand in need of the falſe teſtimony of knaves, or the implicit belief of fools, to give it a good character. At the ſame time that Mr. Pitt affirms that the Britiſh Conſtitution is the freeſt in the world, he inſiſts that it is *conſtitutional* language to tell the people of England that this perfect, this free conſtitution, is in danger of being rejected and overturned if it be examined too cloſely. Political diſcuſſions, he contends, will tend to ſhake the very foundation of it; or, in other words, that its ſecurity depends upon the great maſs of the people being totally ignorant of its principles and merits. One would almoſt be led to imagine, that the Miniſter conſiders our Conſtitution, which has been deſcribed to be an inſtrument of three ſtrings—a political trinity, compoſed of King, Lords, and Commons, in the ſame light as churchmen do the Chriſtian Trinity—fit to be venerated and received, but too ſacred and myſterious to be underſtood. The people have a *ſenſible* conviction that they have a King, and that they have Lords—but as for the Commons, an *ignorant* foreigner would be almoſt ready to conclude, that this word means nothing more than a houſe appointed to regiſter the acts of the Miniſ-

ter, and to levy certain ſums of money for the *uſe of Kings, Lords, and Stateſmen.* It would not be matter of much ſurprize if ſome Member of the Lower Houſe ſhould, in a few years, move to bring in a Bill for the total abolition of elections for Repreſentatives in Parliament, as tending to produce no other effects than unneceſſary expence, idleneſs, drunkenneſs, and tumult, and for making ſeats in the Houſe of Commons hereditary, as in the Upper Houſe; for why ſhould not the Commons have as much *hereditary wiſdom* as the Lords? In ſhort, in whatever light the meaſures of the Britiſh Miniſter are viewed, it cannot be denied that they have a natural tendency to inſure the ruin of every potentate who has the misfortune to adopt them.

All political ſyſtems of deep corruption will, as I before hinted, like radical diſeaſes in the human frame, gradually produce their own deſtruction. There is no real ſecurity for the continuance of any form of government but the cordial approbation of the people. The thrones of kings are always in a tottering condition, unleſs they are fixed in the affections of their ſubjects. Among the real friends of liberty there is a frankneſs and generous ſpirit that diſdains meanneſs and diſſimulation, a benevolence of heart that precludes all ſuſpicion of inſincerity and

and is a better ſhield for the perſonal ſafety of Kings than legions of ſoldiers, and all the crown lawyers that ever have or will appear in the world. Thoſe who have a juſt ſenſe of liberty will prize it beyond all other bleſſings, and every means uſed to check it will ſerve only to encreaſe its ardour, and render tyranny more odious and deteſtable. The poet, in the following lines, has expreſſed the high eſtimation in which he held liberty, without which, indeed, man is a contemptible degraded, and comfortleſs animal.

" Sweet are the jeſſ'min's breathing flow'rs,
" Sweet the ſoft falling vernal ſhow'rs;
" Sweet is the gloom the grove affords,
" And ſweet the notes of warbling birds;
" But not the groves, nor rains, nor flow'rs,
" Nor all the feather'd ſongſters pow'rs,
" Can ever ſweet or pleaſing be,
" O lovely Freedom, without thee."

It is an admitted truth, that to the freedom of diſcuſſion the people of England are indebted for their reformation from Popery, and for their Conſtitution, and now the time is arrived when this boaſted Conſtitution is to be upheld by the ſubverſion of the very principles which gave it birth. In fine, the meaſures of Mr. Pitt ſeem to be ſtudiouſly calcu-

calculated to diſſolve all connexion between the King and the ſubject, by holding it out as a principle of political action, that to preſerve the office and dignity of Monarchy it is neceſſary to degrade and overturn the liberties of the People.

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